

R E M A R K S

The Examiner states that if Applicants desire priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) based upon a previously filed copending application, specific reference to the earlier filed application must be made in the instant application. The present application states that this application is a divisional of the parent application, now abandoned.

Claim 20 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 22 which has been canceled. Thus, the 37 CFR 1.75 objection to the claims is overcome.

Claims 34-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Groger '185. Claim 34 has been amended to avoid this rejection by deleting diethylthiadicarbocyanine and hexamethylindotricarbocyanine iodide.

Claims 1-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Groger '137 in view of the McGill references (McGill '94 and McGill '96), Krech and Dutta, Law or Patonay. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Groger '137 teaches a fluorescent sensor for chemical analysis including fluorophores associated with an optical waveguide. Part of the waveguide excites fluorescence of the fluorophore trapped within the porous waveguide or deposited on the waveguide as a coating. Groger '137 does not teach the specific polymers, nor the particular fluorophore/polymer combination of the claims.

McGill '94 generally discusses choosing polymer coatings for chemical sensors and guides the reader through the various physical and chemical process of selecting sorbent materials as transducer coatings for chemical sensors. However, there is no teaching of polymers for use with a waveguide as used in Groger '137.

McGill '96 discusses choosing polymer coatings for gas and liquid chemical microsensors.

Krech discusses optically sensing chlorinated hydrocarbons with polarity-sensitive dyes in polymeric matrixes.

Dutta teaches the spectroscopic properties of Nile Red (NR), a highly fluorescent laser dye, in organic solvents, binary solvent mixtures and polymers.

Law presents the effects of structural changes on the absorption and multiple fluorescence emission of bis[4-(dimethylamino)phenyl]squaraine and its derivatives.

Finally, Patonay discusses near-infrared probes for determination of solvent hydrophobicity.

According to the Examiner, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the polymers of McGill '94 or McGill '96 in the device of Groger '137 because of their known sorption properties for DMMP and the ability of those polymers to have an optical response to the sorption of an analyte as shown by Krech. The Examiner further contends it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate other dyes known to have polarity or hydrophobicity dependent responses such as taught by Dutta, Law or Patonay into the Groger '137 device.

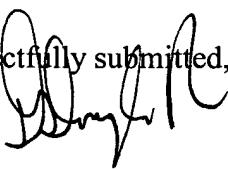
Applicants submit there is nothing in the McGill and/or Krech references which would motivate the ordinary artisan to make the substitution as contended by the Examiner. Nor would such a substitution lead directly or indirectly to the claimed invention, i.e., a probe having a particular fluorophore in a particular polymer. This is especially true in view of the admitted fact the McGill references deal principally with SAW sensors and the Krech reference principally deals with solvatochromic dyes.

Publications listed in the Information Disclosure Statement filed February 12, 2002 have been lined out by the Examiner since it did not have a legible copy of each publication listed. Thus, submitted herewith are an Information Disclosure Statement (Form 1449) re-listing the publications lined through by the Examiner and a legible copy of each publication listed.

A Petition For Extension Of Time is being filed concurrently herewith.

In view of the foregoing, early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge/credit any fee, deficiencies, and/or overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-4293.

Respectfully submitted,


D. Douglas Price
Reg. No. 24,514

Steptoe & Johnson LLP
1330 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 429-6748